

The Entomologist's Record

AND

JOURNAL OF VARIATION.

VOL. XXIV. No. 1.

JANUARY 15TH, 1912.

Eryx fairmairei, Reiche, a Beetle new to Britain.

By H. St. J. K. DONISTHORPE, F.Z.S., F.E.S.

On July 11th, 1908, I found under loose bark in Sherwood Forest several specimens of an *Eryx*: three were taken and one other fell to the ground and escaped. Larvæ also occurred under the bark. I wanted one specimen of *Eryx ater* to complete my series, and when I put one of the Sherwood specimens into my cabinet, I was struck with the difference in appearance it showed to my other specimens, being more parallel, much more shiny, with shorter and thinner antennæ and legs. I always intended to go into the matter, and whenever I opened the drawer the *Eryx* was in I always thought I must settle that *Eryx*. I once went to the museum, but in the general collection they only had *ater*. At last I sent my specimen to Captain Claire Deville and he returned it as *Eryx fairmairei*, Reiche. He writes, that compared with *ater* it is a very distinct species, especially in the structure of the prosternum and the punctuation. He suggests that the German *E. melanarius*, Germ., may be the same species. He says that Seidlitz's description of *fairmairei* is inaccurate.

In the European Catalogue the synonymy of the three species is:

ater, F. (*subsulcatus*, Fairm.)

melanarius, Germ. (*laevis*, Rosh.)

fairmairei, Reiche (*laevis*, Seidl.)

Seidlitz (*Fauna Baltica*, 1891, p. 524), queries *fairmairei*, Reiche, as the same species as his *E. laevis*.

Reiche described (*Ann. Soc. Ent. France*, 1860, p. 731) *fairmairei* as follows:—"The collections of Paris contain a third species of *Eryx* found in the centre of France, the Pyrenees and the Landes, which is shining like *E. bellieri*, and of the same size, it differs by its less elongate form, the well marked striæ of the elytra, and the more acute posterior angles of the thorax."

Deville says *E. fairmairei* occurs in France as far north as the Forest of Fontainebleau.

Mr. Champion tells me that all his Sherwood Forest specimens of *Eryx* are *E. fairmairei*, and those from the New Forest are *E. ater*.

It is very pleasant to be able to introduce such a large and distinct species to our list.